1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Today the empire of Bornu is a Muslim emirate, or kingdom, which forms a subdivision of Bornu Province in the northeastern corner of Nigeria. The emirate covers an area of 24,000 square miles and, according to the 1952 census, has a population of about 1 million people of whom 626,000 are Kanuri—the dominant ethnic group of the kingdom. There are also about 160,000 Fulani and Shuwa who tend their cattle in the area and who carry out a semi-nomadic way of life. Another 225,000 people belong to small pagan groups, from south of the province and the Cameroons, as well as from the Hausa-speaking areas to the west and from the other regions of Nigeria. The emirate also includes about 5000 non-Nigerians, who are from Europe, America, the Near East, and other African countries.

Including the emirate, Bornu Province has approximately 1,600,000 people, 750,000 of whom are Kanuri. Thus many Kanuri live outside the political boundaries of the emirate. Indeed Kanuri can be found in all major cities of northern Nigeria in substantial numbers as well as in the neighboring territories of Chad and Niger. In order to identify the population with a particular territory, however, it is convenient to think of the emirate sub-division of Bornu Province as Bornu, the traditional homeland of the Kanuri kingdom. These are the people who are the subject of this book; they describe themselves as "Kanuri—the people of Bornu." As noted above, outside this entity—of Bornu—there are many other Kanuri, and a political entity, Bornu Province. However, these will be referred to by their full names, while the word "Bornu" will be reserved for the political system, whose present expression, the emirate or kingdom, is continuous with the Bornu of pre-colonial times. This reflects as well the attitude of the people themselves, who use the term "Bornu" to refer primarily to the emirate rather than the larger area of Bornu Province.

One other point should be kept in mind about the population figures. There has been a more recent Nigerian census since 1952, and although the details are unknown as yet, it is generally accepted that the more recent figures are in the neighborhood of thirty-five to forty-five percent higher than those of 1952. This means that Bornu may actually have nearly 900,000 in population, and Bornu Province may reach as high as two million persons, as of 1966.

The Kanuri of Bornu live spread out over the entire area of the emirate, in 306 named and variously sized settlements, ranging from Maiduguri, the capital, with its 80,000 population, down to tiny hamlets of three or four households. Most of the people, about two-thirds of them, live in 248 named village units that range in size from 1000 to 5000. About one-quarter of the population, on the other hand, live in eleven cities whose population is 10,000 or over. This statistical information from the census masks an important point, however, for the towns and villages are really area units and each has within its territory, a set of satellite hamlets that often total to more than half the population of the town or village area. It is this pattern that gives to Bornu its "filled-up" quality even though the population density is approximately twenty-five to forty persons per square mile when calculated from the 1952 census figures or perhaps as much as forty to sixty persons per square mile on the basis of more recent counts. Riding out on horseback into the bush one never feels alone; here and there sprinkled in one or two mile intervals in all directions are little hamlets with their surrounding farmlands while more intermittently, perhaps every five or six miles, are the larger towns and villages. Ev-

101 This study was carried out among the Kanuri people of Bornu Province, Northern Nigeria. The writer and his wife were in Nigeria from August, 1956 until October, 1957. Almost all of that time was spent in the town of Geidam, in the northern part of the province.

A. Geography

131 1. Major geographic features.

Bornu Province is in the northeastern corner of Nigeria. It is bounded to the north by what was then Niger Territory, French West Africa (now the independent Republic of the Niger). [133] To the east lie the marshy shores of Lake Chad and, south of the lake, Cameroons, trusteeship territory administered as part of Bornu Province. The Yobe River, largest of the rivers flowing through Bornu into Chad, forms the northern border of the [161] province for much of its length. Maiduguri, the provincial capital, population 56,740, lies roughly in the geographic cen- [491] ter of the province. The main road through the province runs from Jos through Maiduguri and then on to Fort Lamy in Chad. [496] The railroad barely penetrates into Bornu, running from Kano and ending in the northwest tip of Bornu at Nguru, the second largest town in the province.

133 Bornu is a huge sandy plain, contrasting sharply with the rugged country of the Bauchi Plateau, which rises steeply to the southwest. South of the plain is the hilly area of Biu which is in Bornu Province. The flat plain extends eastward,

[text continues on p. 3]

177 563 as localized sub-cultures of the Kanuri, of which there are many. However, they are Kanuri culturally and recognize themselves as such.

D. The Over-all Forces Affecting Kanuri Culture.

• 161 The Kanuri number over a million. Three-quarters of a million Kanuri live in Nigeria. The Republic of the Niger is largely Kanuri in population in its southwestern sections.

178 105 177 The culture of a people never remains static; it is constantly changing in response to forces, both external and internal. Among the forces instrumental in bringing about changes in Kanuri culture one could cite the introduction of Islam and the concomitant changes occurring in its reinterpretation by the Kanuri; the economic ties with north Africa; the influences of the indigenous population of the Bornu plains as the Kanuri peoples moved into the area; the adaptations demanded by an expanding political system; and finally, the changes resulting from a decline of empire and ultimate conquest. Significant changes are occurring in Kanuri culture today, brought about by contact with Western civilization. The effects of European influence are strongly felt in many areas of life.

1. The Political Situation.

648 [Doi] At the time that this study was carried out (1956-1957) Nigeria was a British colony, under the political control of the British colonial office. The political situation has changed

121 The variables which provide the conceptual basis of the present study are social structure and acculturation. Before one can single out individual groups and focus attention on behavioral patterns which are associated with those groups it is necessary to delineate the larger structural features of Kanuri society so that the particular groups which have been selected for more careful examination can be seen in their societal context. In similar fashion, acculturated behavior can only be evaluated when one has a general understanding of the more stable behavioral norms which characterize Kanuri culture. It is against the background of the expectable Kanuri behavioral patterns that items of acculturated behavior takes on significance.

177 178 It was noted in the previous chapter that important external forces are acting to bring about changes in Kanuri culture. While these are powerful forces, and the changes themselves are far-reaching and significant, Kanuri culture still retains its essential integration. This can be seen in several areas: in the consistency of people's behavior, in the stress placed on important Kanuri values, and in the integration of Kanuri personality which is apparent despite acculturation. The present chapter is devoted to the presentation of these general features of Kanuri culture.

A. Larger Features of the Economy

1. Ecology, Settlement Patterns and Land Tenure.

• 161 There are strong indications that the population of Bornu

161 has been declining in the present century. The Kanuri Empire
[175] had suffered final defeat at the hands of Rabeh's invading forces in 1890, and the countryside had been ravaged in the
[164] succeeding decade. Venereal disease appears to have spread
[842] widely throughout the population leaving in its wake a marked decline in fertility and a resultant decrease in numbers of
311 the Kanuri population. There is consequently little pressure
[137] for land to farm. Large stretches of brush country are unworked, and the denser sections, along old water-courses, are
136 veritable jungles of brush and thorn. Larger wild-life have long since disappeared from Bornu, forced out by many centuries of human occupation, but some of the denser section of thicket might well support them today. A small herd of elephants is reported around Gumsa, in Geidam District, and of course elephants can be found in the extensive marshes along Lake Chad, but by and large the only game one sees are gazelle, monkeys, and birds, including occasional ostriches.

361 The Kanuri are a sedentary, agricultural people, who live in villages and towns. The fields which they farm encircle their villages. They are never found living in dispersed home-
369 steads. A basic division exists between Kanuri village life and Kanuri life in the towns and cities. This division corresponds to the classic distinctions between folk and urban polar extremes. Urban life was present in pre-contact Kanuri culture
[162] and consequently is well integrated into Kanuri culture. In fact, the Kanuri cities of the eighteenth century were unques-

779 58 592 marriage contract, is a common Islamic feature. Sexual rights of the husband, as well as his responsibilities for the support of his wife, are supported by Islamic law. Lastly, Islam does not necessarily recognize marriage as a permanent arrangement; 182 consequently divorce is simple and commonly resorted to. All of these practices, commonly associated with Islamic societies, are characteristic of Kanuri society and are well integrated in Kanuri custom concerning marriage and the family.

D. The Community

162 161 The population of Bornu Emirate is just over a million people. About one-third live in towns with a population of more than 7,000 (see Table I). Following Maiduguri, the capital, which has a total population of 83,327 including the outlying villages, but only 56,777 in the town proper, there are ten towns with populations exceeding 10,000. The average size of these ten towns is 13,879. There are 16 more towns in Bornu Emirate with populations of between 7,000 and 10,000. These 26 towns, plus Maiduguri proper, account for 325,640 people, almost a third of the population.

369 632 121 Although there may be some question whether a town with a population of 10,000 may properly be called "urban," it is clear that on the folk-urban continuum, such towns are distinctly approaching the urban pole[1]. These towns have few or none of the

1. If Miner can call Timbuktu, with its population of 6,500, a "primitive city," then these are certainly towns, or "urban centers." see Horace Miner, The Primitive City of Timbuktu (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953).

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 52]

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 M514 Kanuri M514

Chapter I

The Setting

[1-1]

101 For at least a millenium the drama of empire has been played out in an immense area of Africa known as the western Sudan which lies at the southern fringe of the Sahara and stretches in a roughly east-west direction across the continent from the Atlantic to Lake Chad. [178] Borno is one of the oldest of these and has maintained itself as an [631] ongoing political unit from early times into the modern world. Today the empire is a Muslim Emirate included as a sub-division of Borno 162 Province in the Chad basin of northeastern Nigeria. The Emirate has [131] an area of approximately 24,000 square miles and a population of [161] 1,005,000 (1952 census) of which 626,000 are Kanuri, and 156,000 are Fulani and Shuwa nomads.(1) The remaining 224,000 people include an unspecified number of small pagan groups in the south of the Emirate together with other Nigerians mostly from the Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba tribes. There are as well 5,000 non-Nigerians including Levantines, Europeans and Africans from other countries.

132 The Emirate lies within latitudes 11 to 13 N. and longitudes [131] 11 to 13½ S. and has a typical sub-Saharan savannah climate. There is a mean daily maximum temperature of 94° F. from March to June and a mean daily minimum of 66° F. from July to February. The rainfall varies from north to south, being somewhat heavier in the south. Mean rainfall figures in inches per month at Maiduguri for the last thirty-six years are as follows:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
.01	-	.01	.25	1.59	2.56	6.81	8.80	4.23	.75	.01	-

(1) The Province as a whole has a population of 1,596,000 of which 753,000 are Kanuri. Thus over 80% of the present Kanuri population of the Province live within the boundaries of the Emirate.

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144 southern Nigerians. The comparatively high frequency of Rho (cDe) chromosome, characteristic of other African populations south of the Sahara, is also present among the Kanuri.(1)

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162 The Kanuri are sedentary agriculturalists and live in various sized settlements scattered homogeneously throughout the Emirate. In their language they distinguish three kinds of settlements primarily on the basis of size. The largest category, birni (city) refers to centers of population containing 12,000 to 15,000 and over. Besides Maiguguri, the capital, there are only two or three other centers of such large proportion. Villages (bàlà) form the most numerous category and vary in population from a few hundred to about ten thousand. The last category, hamlets (bàladàa), contain from fifteen to twenty up to several hundred. For political purposes and the gathering of national census data hamlets are lumped in with villages and called village areas. This makes it difficult to tell from census data what proportion of the population of these village areas live in the village itself as compared with the number living in the surrounding hamlets within the boundaries of the village area. Village area tax rolls from one district (Magumeri) indicate that about one-half the population listed for any village area actually live in hamlets around the village included in its jurisdictional area.

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[361] At first sight the Borno countryside appears to be quite thickly populated. When travelling through the bush on horseback or truck, settlements and their encircling farms follow one another after intervals of bushland with unending regularity. This first impression is misleading however for most of the area is uncultivated, unpopulated bushland and the population density is only forty to sixty per square mile. This conclusion

(1) Chalmers J.W.M. and others; THE ABO, MNS and Rh Blood Groups of the Nigerians, Eugenics (London) 17, 3, 168-176, 1953.

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is also supported by estimates made by officials of the Bornu agricultural department whose records indicate that only seven per cent of the total Emirate land area is under cultivation while another eight to nine per cent is resting land. Since the agricultural potential of the area is relatively homogeneous this means that there is no land pressure and no problem of over-population.

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Bornu Emirate is a political unit, among others, within Bornu Province and the latter is in turn one of the provinces making up the Northern Region, the largest of the three regions, of Nigeria. The Emirate is under the nominal rule of the Shehu of Bornu and his council, with this latter body under the executive direction of the Waziri of Bornu. These leaders all reside at the Emirate capital, Maiduguri, which is also the capital of Bornu Province. The entire area of the Emirate is divided into twenty-one districts each under a District Head who resides in the district capital. In its turn, each district is sub-divided into village areas under the headship of a Lawan (village area head). Finally under the Lawan are the wards of his village and the hamlets surrounding his village within the village area boundaries. These wards and hamlets are headed by men called Bulama.

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The colonial government cuts across this semi-traditional structure. Its center is at Kaduna, the capital of the Northern Region of Nigeria, and its representatives reside throughout the region, with their headquarters at each provincial capital. The Resident Officer of Bornu Province is the senior colonial official in the province and is responsible to Kaduna for the administration of several Emirates and divisions of the province of which Bornu Emirate is only one, albeit the largest. Government departments of education, forestry, agriculture, and the like are responsible for their programs throughout the entire province and work through local native authority departments in each Emirate.

443 Magumeri for the Sunday market. Kachella feels that these people are his
366 friends. On the other hand, although Kachella's market friends to the
572 north are known to and known by his market friends to the south, they are not "friends" to one another. Again, the friends to the south have their own friends farther south at markets which Kachella rarely visits. Thus market cycles are overlapping, interlocking networks of social and economic relations which vary for each market town.

443 Beside the interlocking cycle of local markets, each town
366 and/or cycle has some kind of link with a larger center of the export-
439 import trade, the two largest being Maiduguri in the south, and Nguru
[437] (the rail head) in the extreme northwest of the Emirate. Traditionally trading caravans set out from Maiduguri once every two weeks for remote market towns. Although less important today, these can still be
[494] seen. If there are roads, lorries bring people and goods from the larger centres early on market day and return at night or the next day with rural purchasers and travellers returning to or visiting the large urban centre.

443 One of the chief features resulting from this system of
366 distribution is that markets on motor roads assume primary importance
494 while those back in the bush are becoming secondary, and are less well attended. However, the interlocking nature of the rural market cycles makes for ease of communication and distribution in the region as a whole, and this is accentuated by the direct links with the centre and the modern use of lorries as the primary means of transport.

366 The relation between market towns and population size is
494 indirect. Very few market towns in Bornu have population aggregates
• 161 of under one thousand, while the presence of a market and, more im-
[162] portantly, a motor road tend to stimulate population growth. Thus pop-

366 494 161 ulation growth in itself may be said to lead to markets, and markets and transportation facilities, when present, "feed back" to stimulate further growth.

443 494 484 Markets, especially those on motor roads, tend to set the one pattern or rhythm of intersettlement communication and travel. Thus if Bukar or Magumeri wishes to take several bags of millet to Yerwa (Maiduguri) he knows that he can get a lorry at the Thursday, Sunday or Monday market, which can take him and his goods to the capital. Again if Bukar's sister is coming to visit him from the capital or some other distant town in Bornu, she will arrive on a market day. If a man's wife wishes to divorce him, or he her, she must wait until market day to leave him in order to obtain "proper" transportation back to her relatives if they live in some distant part of the state. Thus the market cycle plus the presence of lorries and roads determines a large part of the temporal movement of rural life. This, of course, adds zest, interest and excitement to market day. Beyond the temporal categorization of events, markets are also major sources of news and gossip about politics, marriages, births, circumcisions and deaths. Pagans brew beer for sale on the local market day, and gamblers hold (illicit) card games in the nearby bush area. Gambling, strangers, new bits of gossip, perhaps a new woman or two, drummers and entertainers, all contribute and create not just an ordinary day for buying and selling goods but a festive occasion which is regarded as a break or relief in the daily monotony of rural life.

443 692 [632] Each local market has its head man (mala kasuwe) to whom disputes are referred. If he is unable to settle the disagreement, then the disputants are taken to either the Lawan (Village Head) of the market town, or the judge, if the town boasts a court. In Maiduguri, there

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

121 work. This means that minute details of innovation and social life in general can be recorded at the level of the "common man" as contrasted with the analysis of regional or national productivity figures, or of government policies, or United Nations statistics. What emerges is not, therefore, a total picture of the development process, but rather a grass roots view of the reaction to planned culture change by the people at whom the programme was aimed in the first place.

The purpose of this article is to document and analyse an innovation that succeeded technically, and yet failed because the human components of the innovation experience were not taken into account.

101 The place is Africa, the time is 1956-57. But it could very well be the Near East, Asia or South America, anytime between 1940 and 1960. The people are the Kanuri of Bornu Province, Northern Nigeria, but they could be peasants anywhere.

The Context

174 The Kanuri of Bornu province in northeastern Nigeria have
175 been organized as a Muslim emirate in the Chad basin for many centuries. Their language classification by Greenberg
[13 7] (1954), early Arabic sources, and the scattered work of a few
[642] interested scholars, supports the notion of their continuity in the region, with possible origins somewhere to the northeast of
[177] their present habitat. The pre-colonial emirate kept up continual trade and cultural contacts with the Maghreb during its long history as an organized state.

161 The Kanuri number about one and a half million. The
311 population density is approximately sixty per square mile and there is no pressure on farmland, which can be extended simply by clearing new bush areas further away from the population
433 settlements. The majority of the people are peasants who carry
241 on three analytically separable economic activities. These consist
44 of (1) farming, primarily millet and guinea corn, supplemented by maize, beans, squashes, cucumbers, and groundnuts, (2) cash
[434] cropping, mostly groundnuts, and (3) a dry season non-farming activity connected with the market. Market activities are in